



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.
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SUBJECT: **YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION PROJECT (YSPP)**

This memo will provide you with a final report on the Youth Suicide Prevention Project, a collaboration between the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) and the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) Center for Distance and Online Learning (CDOL). Three years ago, LACDMH initiated an MHSA funded sole source agreement with LACOE with the goal of educating school personnel on identification, prevention, intervention and postvention with youth at risk of suicide. The project outcomes, including targeted outreach, training for school personnel, and web site development and utilization were accomplished. This contract was originally targeted to expire on June 30, 2012, but was extended for an additional six months through December 30, 2012. The extension was made to allow additional time for the completion of all project deliverables.

Recently, CDOL entered into a contract with the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) which allows for the continued maintenance of the suicide prevention web site. This agreement will enable LACOE to maintain the web site and to continue providing information and resources to Los Angeles County residents.

We are pleased to have had this collaborative opportunity to work with CDOL in developing this important resource. A one-page fact sheet with more detail about this project is attached to this memo.

MJS:BM:SC:am

Attachment

c: Chief Executive Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Health Deputies
Robin Kay, Ph.D.
Bryan Mershon, Ph.D.

YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION PROJECT FACT SHEET

The **Youth Suicide Prevention Project** (YSPP) (originally named the "Web Based Training for School Personnel on Suicide Prevention" project), was supported by Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), and Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Early Start funds and administered by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH). This project was implemented through a 3-year sole source contract with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), and Center for Distance and Online Learning (CDOL). CDOL was contracted to design, develop, host, and maintain a web site dedicated to providing critical online information and materials on suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention for school personnel, parents, and students in all eighty K-12 school districts in Los Angeles County. LACOE sub-contracted with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) School Mental Health and its nationally recognized Youth Suicide Prevention Program to provide content for the web site as well as protocols for crisis response to suicide and other crises that affect the school community.

The YSPP web site (which can be accessed at <http://preventsuicide.lacoe.edu/>) was launched in January 2011, and has since been widely publicized throughout the County, State (through the Office of Suicide Prevention), and Nation via publications, newsletters, announcements, webinars, conferences, summits, and meetings of various suicide prevention networks/organizations. The primary project outcomes focused on outreach, training, and web site utilization:

- Targeted outreach activities included presentations to several thousand LAUSD school personnel representing hundreds of schools, trainings for school and crisis team staff from several other school districts in which recent youth suicides had occurred, and presentations to the LACOE Board and multiple LACOE divisions and programs.
- Training for school personnel focused on how to use the information and resources of the web site to establish or update district policies and procedures in suicide prevention and early identification of students with mental health problems. Participants in these trainings, as well as web site users (particularly school administrators), consistently provided high ratings and positive evaluations of the information they accessed (including content addressing the aftermath of student suicides).
- Since it was launched, the web site has been viewed by over 12,000 visitors and approximately 50,000 individual page views have been recorded, including web site visits from countries throughout the world.

- This past year, the principal YSPP web site content developer (a national expert in youth suicide prevention) joined members of the DMH Partners in Suicide Prevention team in meetings with visiting delegations of physicians, mental health providers, and school personnel from China and Korea to share and discuss YSPP web site resources, suicide prevention outreach, education, and training strategies.

Beginning July 1, 2012, CDOL was granted an extension of the YSPP contract through December 31, 2012. During this period, CDOL has continued to host the web site and provide in-kind resources that leveraged prior budget support from DMH administered MHSA/PEI funds. This year CDOL also received the contract for the *Student Mental Health Initiative (SMHI), Region 11* (Los Angeles County), funded by a statewide California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) grant. These funds and related project activities have enabled staff to continue promoting its visibility and utilization. Recently, CDOL was invited to seek additional CalMHSA funding grant support to continue hosting the YSPP web site and to develop programming and content for webinars, updated/new materials and resources, and to enhance targeted outreach, training, and technical assistance to smaller school districts throughout Los Angeles County.